United Nations

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F R I D A Y H I G H L I G H T S

+ Secretary-General briefs Security Council on his Special Representative's mission to South Africa; recommends sending 30 observers to serve in South Africa.

+ Four French soldiers with United Nations Protection Force injured this morning in mortar attack on United Nations headquarters building in Sarajevo.

+ Moldova asks Secretary-General to consider possibility of sending United Nations observer mission to Moldova to supervise implementation of peace agreement for Dniester region.

+ World Bank approves $600 million loan to Russian Federation to provide foreign exchange to purchase critically needed imports to address recent decline in production.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has recommended that the United Nations make available some 30 observers to serve in South Africa, in close association with the South African National Peace Secretariat, in order to enhance "the capacity of indigenous structures that can play a major role in the building of peace, both in the present and in the future". The number of observers, he continues, could be supplemented by other appropriate international organizations, such as the Commonwealth, the European Community and the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

The Secretary-General made the recommendation in a report submitted to the Security Council this afternoon on the recently-concluded visit to South Africa by his Special Representative for that country, Cyrus Vance. He also proposes that, in order for the Security Council to be provided with regular, impartial and objective information, further missions such as that of Mr. Vance be undertaken "on a quarterly basis, or more frequently, if the situation so warrants".

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Mr. Boutros-Ghali urges the international community to support "the far-reaching" work undertaken by Justice Richard Goldstone, Chairman of the Commission of Enquiry into Public Violence and Intimidation. He further calls on the Government of South Africa and the various parties, to "fully and speedily" implement the Commission's recommendations, for instance, those relating to a total ban on the public display of dangerous weapons and the security of workers' hostels. He says he believes the leaders of the major political parties should, as the Commission recommends, take firm steps to stop their supporters from participating in acts of violence.

Stressing that the task of conducting negotiations on the creation of a democratic, non-racial and united South Africa is "uniquely the responsibility of South Africans themselves", the Secretary-General says he was "heartened" by statements made to his Special Representative of the determination of the major parties to return, as early as possible, to the negotiating table. In his opinion, the CODESA process "must be pursued, and improved", despite "all of its shortcomings". "It needs to encourage others, who have not yet joined, to do so", says Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali.

He adds that he is "strongly of the view that actions such as the immediate release of all remaining political prisoners could contribute greatly to improving the political climate, creating trust and burying the unhappy past".

In a separate development, part of the team of United Nations observers who have been in South Africa this past week are due back at Headquarters this weekend. A few team members will remain in South Africa to observe the further demonstrations over the next couple of days.

The team was sent to South Africa at the request of the African National Congress, which organized the mass demonstrations held throughout the country on Monday and Tuesday to call for a transition to non-racial democracy. The South African Government agreed to the United Nations team coming to the country to provide an independent observer presence at the demonstrations.

In yet another development, the Special Committee against Apartheid has announced that on Monday, 10 August, a meeting will be held to mark the International Day of Solidarity with the Struggle of Women in South Africa, which is observed annually on 9 August.

In the afternoon, there will be a panel discussion on the situation of women and other vulnerable groups in the transition process in that country, and on assistance that the international community can provide to redress the consequences of years of apartheid. On the panel will be a number of prominent South African women from the various parties in the country.

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The United Nations Spokesman in Belgrade has confirmed that four French soldiers with the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) were injured this morning during a mortar attack on the United Nations headquarters building in

Sarajevo. Three mortar rounds landed in the vicinity of the building and two actually hit it.

One of the wounded soldiers was seriously injured and was evacuated for treatment. The other three were less seriously hurt.

In related news, the Spokeswoman for the Secretary-General announced today that the suspension of the United Nations humanitarian airlift to Sarajevo, due to have ended at around that time, had been extended. The suspension was ordered on Tuesday for 72 hours in response to heavy shelling around Sarajevo airport.

She said that Major-General Philippe Morillon, the Deputy Force Commander of UNPROFOR, who had been meeting with the various parties in Sarajevo on resumption of the cease-fire, had left for Zagreb. There he will brief Force Commander General Satish Nambiar on the outcome of his talks. The decision on reopening Sarajevo airport would be made after that briefing.

In a separate development, the Spokeswoman also announced that Vladimir Petrovsky, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, would be leaving New York this weekend for London, to hold consultations on preparations for the International Conference on Yugoslavia, scheduled to be held in London from 26 to 28 August. The Conference is to be co-chaired by the United Nations and the European Community.

Mr. Petrovsky would then pay a brief visit to Paris for consultations, followed by a trip to Brussels to attend the 14 August plenary of the Conference on Yugoslavia presided over by Lord Carrington.

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Moldova has asked Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali in a letter to consider the possibility of sending a United Nations observer mission to Moldova to supervise the implementation of the provisions of the Agreement on the principles for a peaceful settlement of the armed conflict in the Dniester region of that country. The Agreement, which aims at an urgent cease-fire and a political solution in full accordance with the United Nations Charter and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, was signed on 21 July by the President of Moldova, Mircea Snegur, and the President of the Russian Federation, Boris Yeltsin.

According to the letter, dated 31 July, the United Nations observer mission would also supervise the process of establishing peace in the eastern region of Moldova.

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The World Bank today approved a $600 million loan to the Russian Federation to provide foreign exchange to purchase critically needed imports to address the recent decline in production.

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The rehabilitation loan will support the first phase of a broad-based programme of reforms to establish a framework for the transition to a market economy. They include privatization and restructuring of state-owned enterprises, promotion of foreign direct investment, pro-competition and anti-monopoly policies, reform of financial institutions and the commercial banking sector, and establishment of a social safety net to protect those who may be affected by the reforms. Subsequent World Bank operations will support efforts by the Government to deepen the programme for privatization and social protection, as well as extend reforms to include agriculture and the energy sector.

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